

## What is Caregiver Burnout?

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion. It can be accompanied by a change in attitude (from positive to unconcerned). Burnout can occur when caregivers aren't able to get the help they need.

Caregivers who are “burned out” may feel guilty about spending time on themselves and could ultimately experience stress and depression as a result.

Although stress can accompany burnout, they are not the same. Where stress is a feeling of being unable to cope with pressures, burnout is a feeling of “being out of gas” and can present as disengagement, lack of motivation and helplessness/hopelessness.



## Resources

Please consider referring to the following resources for help with your caregiving:

- Ontario Caregiver Organization:  
(<https://ontariocaregiver.ca/>)  
*Support Line (1-833-416-2273)*
- CHATS community & Home Assistance for Seniors:  
(<https://chats.on.ca/support-for-caregivers/>)  
*York Region Caregiver Education Counsellor Tel: 905-713-6596*  
*South Simcoe Caregiver Education Counsellor Tel: 905-713-6596*
- Powerful Tools for Caregivers for Medical Health Caregiving:  
*Healthy Living Now – Virtual Workshop* (<https://www.healthy-living-now.ca/upcoming-workshops/>)

In addition to connecting with community programs, please contact your GP/NP or healthcare practitioner for additional resources and support.

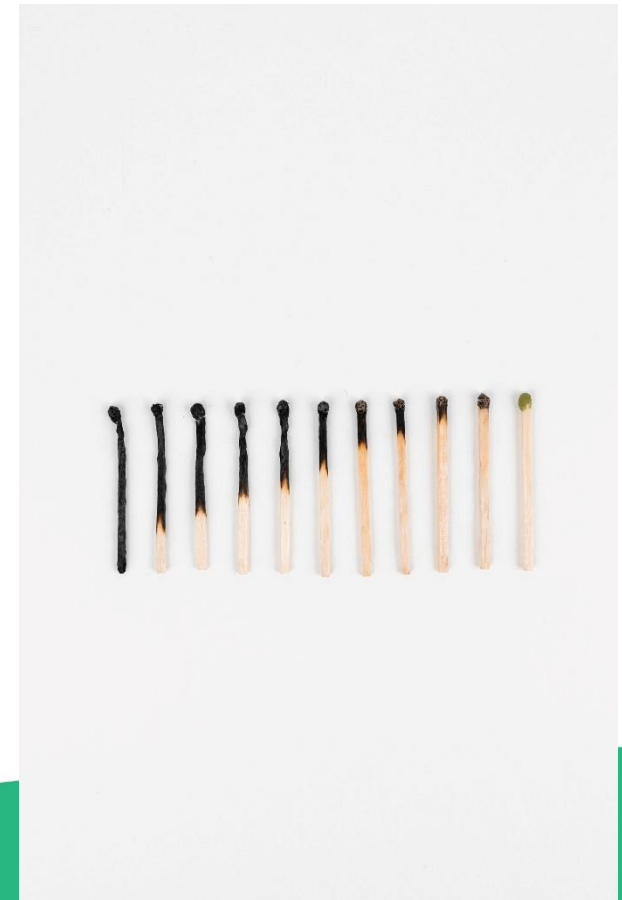
### References:

- 1) <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9225-caregiver-burnout>
- 2) <https://ontariocaregiver.ca/>



## Caregiver Burnout

Signs, Symptoms and Prevention



## Causes of caregiver burnout:

A caregiver is defined as a family member or paid helper who regularly looks after a child, elderly or unwell person.

Caregivers are often so busy caring for others that they tend to neglect their own physical, emotional and spiritual health. Causes of burnout can include:

1. **Role Confusion:** Caregiver, spouse, child, friend etc.
2. **Unrealistic Expectations:** Caregivers may overextend themselves in the care of a loved one and may feel that prioritizing their own care will negatively affect their loved one.
3. **Lack of Control:** Caregivers may become frustrated by a lack of financial resources and skills to organize their loved one's care.
4. **Other Factors:** Many caregivers cannot recognize when they are suffering from burnout and can get to a point where they are unable to function effectively.

## Symptoms

Symptoms of caregiver burnout can be similar to symptoms of stress and depression:

- **Withdrawal** from friends, family and other loved ones
- **Loss of interest** in activities you may have previously enjoyed
- **Feeling blue, irritable, hopeless** and helpless
- **Changes in appetite**, weight or both
- **Changes in sleep** patterns
- **Getting sick** more often
- **Emotional and physical exhaustion**
- Feelings of **wanting to hurt yourself** or the person whom you are caring for



## Prevention



Respite care is planned or emergency or temporary care provided to caregivers of a child or adult. Respite programs provide short term and time limited breaks for unpaid caregivers.